

## **GLOSSARY of TERMS**

Advisory Committee on Diversity  
California Children and Families Commission  
(Approved by the State Commission on October 18, 2001)

This glossary<sup>1</sup> is intended to define terms related to diversity and disability used by the California Children and Families Commission. Recognizing that these terms evoke many different perspectives and responses, the Committee on Diversity adopted these definitions for use in its work to influence policy and programs related to young children (prenatal to 5 years of age) and their families in California. This Glossary of Terms was developed in conjunction with the Equity Principles that were approved by the Advisory Committee on Diversity on June 29, 2001. It is anticipated that this Glossary will be revised periodically as needed.

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### **ADVOCACY**

Actions taken to influence public policy. At the service level, efforts made on behalf of a client or family to assure that they receive the services to which they are entitled.

### **CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES AND OTHER SPECIAL NEEDS<sup>2</sup>**

Refers to those children who:

- 1) Are protected by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
- 2) Are at-risk of a developmental disability as defined by the Early Intervention Services Act, or
- 3) Do not have a specific diagnosis but whose behavior, development, and/or health affect their family's ability to find and maintain services, e.g., child care.

### **CLASS**

Refers to economic and related social differences in our society.

- ❑ It can refer to the way people identify themselves based on their socio-economic background (e.g. poor or working-, middle-, upper-class)
- ❑ Class background can also be interpreted as those factors that affect not only how much money a person makes, but also access to resources and services.
- ❑ Class differences are often reflected in the disproportionate power that people of middle- and upper-class backgrounds have in making policy decisions.

### **CLASSISM**

Biased attitudes and beliefs that result in, and help to justify, unfair treatment of an individual or group because they are poor. 11/13/2001

- ❑ Can be expressed as public policies and institutional practices that prevent people from breaking out of poverty rather than ensuring equal economic, social and educational opportunity

### **COMMUNITY**

Broadly used to refer to a group of people that have a distinct identity, usually residents of a geographic area; but can mean a population that shares a non-geographic common interest, condition, culture, purpose, characteristics, or function.

### **CULTURE**

The values, beliefs, traditions and social norms of a particular group. It evolves in any given group in response to what is occurring in the environment.

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted from, the *Strategic Plan* of the Los Angeles County Children and Families Proposition 10 Commission, and *Walking the Walk: Principles for Building Community for Equity and Diversity*, California Tomorrow.

<sup>2</sup> Adapted from the MAP Project of the California Child Care Health Program, WestED

## **CULTURAL COMPETENCY**

Cultural competency means services, supports, or other assistance that are conducted or provided in a manner that is responsive to the beliefs, interpersonal styles, attitudes, language and behaviors of individuals who are receiving services, and in a respectful manner that has the greatest likelihood of ensuring their maximum participation in the program.<sup>3</sup>

## **DISABILITIES**

Disabilities serve as an umbrella term for impairment, activity limitation or participation restrictions<sup>4</sup>. The following definitions are offered as examples of how disability is defined by various government funded programs or statutes:

- Children birth to three years with disabilities or who are at risk for a disability as defined by California Early Start Program eligibility:
  - Infants and toddlers with a developmental delay in one or more developmental areas;
  - Infants and toddlers with established risk conditions; and
  - Infants and toddlers who are at high risk for having a development disability due to a combination of biomedical risk factors (Title 14. California Early Intervention Services Act, Chapter 4 section 95014[a]).
- Children three to five years of age with a disability as defined by the California Department of Education, Preschool Special Education eligibility:
  - Having a disabling condition or an established medical disability (California Education Code, Chapter 4.45, section 56441.11 (b) (1) such as autism, deaf-blindness, deafness, hearing impairment, mental retardation, multiple disabilities, orthopedic impairment, other health impairment, serious emotional disturbance, specific learning disability, speech or language impairment, traumatic brain injury, visual impairment, and established medical disability).
  - These children, birth to 21 years inclusive, may be assessed by public school special education staff, regional center staff, or another appropriately licensed clinical professional.
- Children with special health care needs are defined by the federal Maternal and Child Health Bureau at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services as those who have or are at risk for a chronic physical, developmental, behavioral, or emotional condition and who also require health and related services of a type or amount beyond that required by children generally.
- Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Public Law 101-336. The ADA's protection applies primarily, but not exclusively, to individuals with disabilities. The term disability means, with respect to an individual:
  - Has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the major life activities of such individuals such as caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, and working;
  - Has a record of such an impairment;
  - Is being regarded as having such an impairment; or
  - Other individuals who are protected in certain circumstances include 1) those, such as parents, who have an association with an individual known to have a disability, and 2) those who are coerced or subjected to retaliation for assisting people with disabilities in asserting their rights under the ADA.

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<sup>3</sup> Roberts, R. et.al (1990) Developing Culturally Competent Programs for Families of Children with Special Needs. Washington, D.C.; Georgetown University Child Development Center

<sup>4</sup> International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICIDH-2) of the World Health Organization (December 2000)

## **DIVERSITY**

Diversity has been defined by the Advisory Committee on Diversity to be inclusive of children prenatally to five years of age, regardless to immigration status, who:

- Are from different ethnic, linguistic, cultural, socio-economic, religious, geographical and/or from other historically or currently under-served communities, or
- Have disabilities and other special needs.

## **EQUITY**

Equity is defined as the quality, state, or ideal of being just and fair. For members of historically or currently under-served groups, which includes children with disabilities, who have been subjected to exclusion and discrimination, equity may mean providing greater resources to compensate and ensure that they do receive equitable treatment/services and equitable access to economic, social and educational opportunities.

## **ETHNICITY**

A group identity defined by common political, historical and social experience and which people use to categorize themselves and others. Ethnicity is shaped by national and geographic origin, race, language and culture, although the extent to which each of these factors is salient varies by group.

## **FAMILY**

A family is broadly defined in the context of diversity to include both traditional and less traditional family structures. The family is represented by two or more individuals, belonging to the same or different kinship groups, usually residing in the same household, experiencing common emotional bonds, and sharing certain obligations toward each other and toward others<sup>5</sup>. Families are formed through birth, adoption, marriage, or from a desire for mutual support. The shape and size of families varies enormously--big or small, extended or nuclear, and can have one parent, two parents, and grandparents (multi-generational). A family is culture unto itself, with different values and unique ways of realizing its dreams. Families create neighborhoods, communities, states and nations.<sup>6</sup>

## **INCLUSION**

Inclusion is defined as the full and active participation of children with disabilities in community activities, services and programs designed for typically developing children, including child care.

## **INCLUSIVE GOVERNANCE**

Inclusive governance ensures that the diverse perspectives of the people affected by a decision, especially groups currently and historically under-represented, are taken into account in making and shaping decisions. Inclusive governance ensures that people who are recipients of services and other community residents are represented and heard. The views and experiences of the different kinds of people who make up a community—people of different ethnic groups, class backgrounds, sexual orientation, and genders are taken into account. The underlying goal of inclusive initiatives is achieving more equitable results across ethnic, cultural, linguistic and economic groups.<sup>7</sup>

## **LIMITED-ENGLISH SPEAKING PROFICIENT AND NON-ENGLISH SPEAKING PROFICIENT CHILDREN**

These terms are used to refer to children who are unable to benefit fully from an English-only early care and developmental services and programs as a result of either of the following:

- (1) Having used a language other than English when they first began to speak
- (2) Having a language other than English predominantly or exclusively spoken at home.

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<sup>5</sup> Adapted from Johnson, R: Family Development. In Standhope M, Lancaster J, editors; Community health nursing: process and practice for promoting health, ed 3, St. Louis, 1992, Mosby

<sup>6</sup> Adapted from the Task Force on Young Children and Families (1990, New Mexico)

<sup>7</sup> Revised Definition of Inclusive Governance, Foundation Consortium (October 2000)

**OUTCOME**

A desired end results and/or change stated in measurable, attainable terms, such as: "decrease infant mortality and morbidity by XX percent by a specified date". For Proposition 10, the State Commission has defined strategic results as the overarching direction or broad outcomes for improvements in four areas: (1) improved family functioning? strong families; (2) improved child development? children learning and ready for school; (3) improved child health? healthy children; and (4) improved systems to support these results. See the CCFC Results to be Achieved Report, which is available on the web ([www.ccfc.ca.gov](http://www.ccfc.ca.gov)).

**POLICY**

A general statement or understanding which guides thinking and action in decision making.

**PREJUDICE**

A preconceived judgment or opinion usually based on limited information.

**PRINCIPLES**

Basic standards or sets of beliefs that shape behavior or influence choices.

**RACE**

A socially constructed label that categorizes people based upon heritage and inherited characteristics (e.g.) skin color or general appearance.

- ❑ A growing number of anthropologists and geneticists are convinced that the biological concept of race has become scientifically antiquated since human inherited traits do not cluster nor stay within any particular group, and the physical characteristics most people associate with race are the result of adaptation to climate, diet and natural selection. Others argue that there is reality to race in the evolutionary, biological and historical sense.

**RACISM**

A system of privilege and penalty based on one's race that results in unequal distribution of goods, services, and power.

**STAKEHOLDERS**

Individuals, families, formal networks (libraries, unions, service agencies, advocacy groups) and informal networks (resident associations, consumers) that are impacted by and have a strong interest in the quality of life of a community, population or neighborhood.

**TOLERANCE**

To promote acceptance of individual diversity within communities, to expose individuals to the commonalities of all humans, to encourage and support efforts within communities that promote diversity, to break down social barriers created by ignorance and stereotypes, and to combat hate and prejudice toward individuals and groups of any ethnicity, national origin, gender, disability, or sexual orientation.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Adapted from Tolerance in America Foundation, Inc. ([www.toleranceinc.org](http://www.toleranceinc.org))